

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1.-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A method for obtaining, during the manufacture of a dairy product selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of cheeses and other fermented dairy products, an acidification kinetic which is substantially independent of the content of the milk in terms of its constituents which are involved in the metabolism of urea, ~~in which there is incorporated~~ said method comprising incorporating with the milk at least one strain of Streptococcus thermophilus which is ~~at least partially~~ incapable of hydrolyzing urea.

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10, in which the acidification kinetic is substantially independent of the urea content of the milk.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10, in which the acidification kinetic of the milk is substantially independent of the nickel or cobalt content of the milk.

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10, in which the acidification kinetic of the milk does not exhibit any temporary slowing down.

14. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 10, in which there is incorporated with the milk at least one mutant strain of *Streptococcus thermophilus* which is ~~at least partially~~ incapable of hydrolyzing urea, at a seeding rate lower than the seeding rate used for the parent strain of *Streptococcus thermophilus* capable of hydrolyzing urea.

15. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 10, in which the *Streptococcus thermophilus* strain is the strain 298-K registered at the CNCM under number I-2311.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10, in which the *Streptococcus thermophilus* strain is the strain 298-10 registered at the CNCM under the number I-2312.

17. (Canceled)